

CORRIDOR COMMENT

SWIMMING with the tide is proverbially easy. It is when one turns and breasts the stream that stamina is tested. Moving with the crowd congenially swallows up identity. It is when one bucks the line that individuality is emphasized.

So in the course of the long-drawn-out Parliamentary discussion of the Grain Bill, with its two



J. J. CARRICK, M.P.

hundred and forty-seven sections of technical prospective legislation regulating the handling of wheat from producer to consumer. Ministers and members contributed at length — and were merely mentioned in despatches, or passed up altogether. Then unexpectedly, as the House was droning through the non-contentious clauses, a young new-comer rose, and, in his brief maiden speech, furnished the "story" of the day. Ministers and ex-Ministers, and members on both party sides, had bespoken and re-bespoken their arduous and able efforts to stop the mixing of grain, and had rivalled each other in their proposals to make the prohibition more effective. Then came John James Carrick—famously known as "J. J."—with proof that he had claims to distinction other than as the young political gladiator who had chased Jim Connec out of the representation of Thunder Bay district. J. J. had a few words to say—and proceeded to say them.

There seemed to be, said he, an opinion in Canada that mixing was a crime. It was a misdemeanor under the act. But—and here J. J. made the House sit up—in his opinion it was "a simple business proposition." With arguments, pro and con, on the question, readers of the COURIER are not now interested. Suffice it to say that Mr. Carrick had caught the undivided attention of the House, made out his case, and before he got through availed himself of the favourable opportunity to press home a vigorous advocacy of establishing a sample market at the twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William.

That's J. J. all over, and all the time. He's the greatest advertiser of them all, and when he hasn't the audience handy he just makes it. A plea from a new member for consideration for his constituency under such circumstances as those which confronted him the other day would have been passed un-noticed by a sophisticated House and a cynical Press Gallery. But Carrick first made "copy"; he got the undivided and somewhat startled attention of all; and then, at the psychological moment, he got in his good work for the communities he represents.

The member for Thunder Bay is a true type of the western "hustler" as he is pictured in his most hustling moments. He has done big things and done them in mighty short time. He is yet on the sunny side of forty, but he has been Mayor of his home city, member of the Provincial Legislature, and now member of Parliament. Beside which it would be difficult to count the number of enterprises in which he is interested. And there is no "dummy director" business about J. J. Carrick. He is there with the goods every time. His operations in real estate have been on a mammoth and invariably successful scale. He has been described as the maker of modern cities; of a certainty he has been the maker of modern home districts.

In politics J. J. is a law unto himself. He campaigns on his own lines, and not only at election times. When he was holding down the Port Arthur seat in the Legislature he inaugurated a mid-term campaign throughout the whole area of his big constituency. And he conducted a regular political vaudeville troupe. There were moving pictures, party songs and skits sandwiched in along with political wisdom as doled out by the member. It was a novel experiment, but it made votes.

It would be too much to expect this man of initiative to be a mere voting machine. Party whips in the Legislature learned that he had a way of

his own. One day he rose and attacked the administration of the Government he was supporting. It was his way of getting what he wanted—and he got it. Some of these days he may want something in Parliament, and the Government may be a little slow in seeing that he gets it. Then—but just wait and see.

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MYSTERY surrounds the fate of Edward Norman Lewis since he located in that unobtrusive front stall at the end of the initial row of government benches. Time was when the member for West Huron was in the limelight. Never a week went by without leaving record of legislation fathered by him. He was a great reformer in those days, and his endeavour ran the gamut of all ills that flesh is heir to. He was always on the look-out for wrongs to right and misfortunes to redress. Alas and alack! Silence now broods over the habitation of Edward Norman Lewis. He has quit adjusting the machinery of Providence and the Dominion. His voice is no longer heard, and the Order Papers seem a bit desolate without those customary notices of bills to turn the sun back and filter the ocean.

Yet yonder, from within the privileged precincts of Room Sixteen, comes glad tidings to the effect that the member for West Huron has one more arrow in his legislative quiver. From the astronomical and the aesthetic they say he has turned to the sordid and practical problems of a parliamentarian's life. Edward Norman Lewis is to produce a masterpiece in his statute-framing career. He is to introduce a bill to abolish the whole party patronage system. Think of that.

His ambition was, his fellow-Conservatives say, born in the fiery furnace of experience. He created one vacancy in the civil service of his riding. He removed one man from office. And he had one hundred and six applicants for the job. Lewis is too good a politician to dote upon situations of that character, so he hastened to make his selection. The results are his justification for his prospective measure of reform. The hundred and five unsuccessful party friends told him what they thought of him, and then quit speaking to him altogether; the one successful applicant came to him in indignant protest against the meagreness of the re-

muneration of the office, and the wife of the official he had beheaded chased him with a broom stick or some other equally congenial weapon. There is now no heartier supporter of civil service reform and extinction of patronage than the member for West Huron.

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THAT astonishing lust for Government job finds its most frenzied expression at the Capital. Ottawa is the centre of the civil service and yet, strange to say, the fascination seems to reach its acutest form here. For weeks it was impossible to get near the room in the Parliament Building allotted to Messrs. Fripp and Chabot, the two Conservative members for Ottawa, for the steady stream of anxious humanity on the job-hunt. And this, despite the fact that the members in question had found it necessary to open a special city or down-town office to assist in taking care of the problem. It has been a strenuous life for the two new parliamentarians. Chabot has grown thin over it—one should say, thinner. Fripp, on the contrary, has waxed fleshy. But then Fripp sees the humour of it all. One day he annexed some three hundred names of party patriots who were willing to serve a grateful country for a consideration. Then he closed up his office and went in search of Hal. McGiverin, his Liberal predecessor in the Ottawa seat. They are good personal friends.

"Hal," said Fripp, "I am consumed with curiosity, a curiosity which only you can satisfy. What in the world did you do with all the party applicants for jobs that waited upon you?"

"My dear fellow," responded the former Liberal member, "I endeavoured to be as affable as possible and kept a list of the applicants for constant reference when vacancies occurred. By the way, I still keep it as a memento of when I was numbered among the great."

"Bet it wasn't as long as that," quoth Fripp, producing his manuscript and handing it over for inspection.

"Mmm-m," murmured McGiverin with a distinct rising inflexion. Then he broke into laughter, hearty, uproarious laughter. He hastened over to his desk and from one of the pigeon-holes drew forth a long roll of parchment. "Let's turn ourselves into an impromptu committee of enquiry," he suggested.

An hour later Mr. Fripp departed, a wiser, if not a sadder man. Of the three hundred odd names upon his patronage list he had checked off no less than one hundred and ninety-three who were also enrolled with Mr. McGiverin!

H. W. A.

Appreciating a Great Choir

By AUGUSTUS BRIDLE

THURSDAY afternoon of last week the usually diligent and commercial Yonge St. in Toronto was almost suddenly transformed into the semblance of a holiday. More than three thousand people flocked away from Massey Hall, half a block east of the retail thoroughfare, crowding the cars, blocking the sidewalks, clatter-



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ing away in motors and carriages and chattering as they went—about Lhevinne and the Thomas Orchestra; about the Symphony of Brahms in D Minor which a European violinist at the door declared to be perfect, absolute music; about the Liszt rhapsody played by the Russian pianist with the orchestra—and the hackneyed but always novel and inspiring Tannhauser Overture first heard in Toronto many years

ago when played by that same orchestra under Theodore Thomas, but then a band of less than sixty men, now nearly a hundred.

It was the orchestral matinee of the Mendelssohn Choir, which this year attracted a bigger crowd than ever before in the remarkable history of that

society. Some eight or nine years ago this matinee began as a complimentary concert to the members of the choir and their friends, when Victor Herbert wielded the baton of the Pittsburgh Symphony. Later, when Emil Paur came to the baton, the matinee was listed among the pay concerts of the society. Now, with Frederick Stock and his superb band of more than ninety men, the biggest orchestra that ever came to any Canadian city, the orchestra concert with its assisting artist has become one of the truly big musical events of the season. And for one afternoon, in a week chockfull of music, it transforms Toronto from the "consumingly commercial" to the festive air of a German city; which is always worth while and should happen oftener.

However, it is not of the great Chicago orchestra that one is most disposed to write; because but for the enterprise and organization of the Mendelssohn Choir this band of men would seldom be heard here.

Thursday evening was the last of five record-breaking concerts—in attendance, in box office receipts, in obvious enthusiasm over a series of almost sensational offerings in choral music. Nowhere else in America, except once every two years in Cincinnati, may be seen such a furore of interest over choral singing. So has it been these five years since ever the Choir went to New York, where within two weeks it will be heard again as well as in critical Boston and grateful Buffalo.

The writer of this did not hear the last two of these choral concerts; that of Wednesday being the Manzoni Requiem described at some length in these columns last year. The Monday and Tuesday events were sufficiently typical. Since last September the greatest choir in America has been rehearsing as hard as any professional orchestra rehearses in order to give the patrons of the society—comprising a large section of the musical public in Toronto—the full worth of their money in the form of art.

Two absolutely new works in Canada were both